

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

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1. A system for associating a credibility rating with a document located in an online search comprising:

an information gathering device adapted to retrieve the document from an information source;

an information analysis device adapted to determine an online id associated with the document; and

a credibility rating system adapted to provide the credibility rating associated with the online id to the information analysis device, wherein a user can access the credibility rating associated with the document.

2. The system of claim 1 further comprising a searchable index adapted to store an association of the credibility rating of the online id with the document, wherein the association is accessible by a search engine.

3. The system of claim 2 wherein the searchable index is adapted to map a unique identifier associated with the document to the associated credibility rating.

4. The system of claim 1 wherein the document is a web page and the web page has a unique identifier comprising a uniform resource locator ("URL").

5. The system of claim 1 wherein the online search is an Internet search and the document is retrieved from the Internet.

6. The system of claim 1 wherein the credibility rating system comprises:

a user interface adapted to allow an owner of the online id to input information into the credibility rating system that can be validated and write the information into a credibility database wherein the information is stored and associated with the online id;

an input validator coupled to the user interface and adapted to verify that the input by the owner is correct and to determine the credibility rating, the credibility rating reflecting the input; and

an application service interface adapted to allow a third party to access the credibility rating stored in the credibility rating system.

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a profiling interface adapted to allow a mapping of the online id to an online credibility rating;

a message rating interface adapted to allow the online  
id to input statements related to a validity of the  
document and determine a weight of the statement  
based on a statement analysis, the weight of the  
statement being used by the input validator to  
determine the credibility rating.

8. The system of claim 6 further comprising a message posting module coupled to the credibility database and adapted to allow the online id to distribute a message linked to the credibility rating and document to third parties.

9. The system of claim 7 further comprising an application access point coupled to the credibility database adapted to allow a third party to submit a query for the credibility rating associated with the online id.

10. A credibility rating system comprising:

an input validator coupled to the user interface and adapted to verify that the inputted credibility information is correct and to rate the inputted credibility information in the form of a credibility rating;

an application service interface adapted to allow a third party to access the credibility rating from the credibility database.

a profiling interface adapted to allow a mapping of the author identifier to an online credibility rating;

a rating import module adapted to allow rating information from outside sources to be linked to the credibility rating in the credibility database; and

12. The system of claim 10 further comprising a message posting module coupled to the credibility database and adapted to allow the author to distribute a message linked to the credibility rating and document to third parties.

14. A method of associating a credibility rating to a document retrieved in an Internet search comprising the steps of:

retrieving a credibility rating from a credibility rating system for the online id; and

associating the credibility rating with the document.

16. The method of claim 14, further comprising the step of developing a credibility rating for an online id, the method comprising the steps of:

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validating the input by determining a weight of the
input;
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storing the credibility rating in a searchable index.

18. The method of claim 14 further comprising the step of reordering a search result list comprising a list of documents returned from the Internet search relative to the credibility rating associated with each document.

19. The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of displaying a symbol on the information indicating the quality rating to the user.

20. A computer program product comprising:

a computer useable medium having a computer readable code device embodied therein for causing a computer to associate a credibility rating with a document located in an online search, the computer readable code device in the computer program product comprising:

a computer readable program code device for causing a computer to retrieve the document from an information source;

a computer readable program code device for causing a computer to determine an online id associated with the document; and

a computer readable program code device for causing a computer to retrieve a credibility rating associated with the online id and allow a user to access the credibility rating.

21. The computer program product of claim 20 further comprising:

a computer useable medium having computer readable code device embodied therein for causing a computer to

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allow an owner of the online id to formulate the credibility rating for the online id, the computer readable code device in the computer program product comprising:

a computer readable program code device for causing a computer to allow the owner of the online id to input information into the system that can be validated and write the information into a credibility database wherein the information is stored and associated with the online id;

a computer readable program code device for causing a computer to verify that the input by the owner is correct and determine the credibility rating based on the input; and

a computer readable program code device for causing a computer to allow a third party to access the credibility rating stored in the credibility rating system.

22. An article of manufacture comprising:

a computer useable medium having a computer readable program code device embodied therein for causing a computer to associate a credibility rating with a document located in an online search, the computer readable code device in the article of manufacture comprising:



a computer readable program code device for causing a computer to retrieve a credibility rating associated with the online id and allow a user to access the credibility rating.

a computer useable medium having a computer readable program code device embodied therein for causing a computer to allow an owner of the online id to develop a credibility rating profile for the online id, the computer readable code device in the article of manufacture comprising:

a computer readable program code device for causing  
a computer to verify that the input by the owner

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